

# Pollution Prevention Practices for **Visitor and Welcome Centers**

[www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/viriniagreen/visitor.html](http://www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/viriniagreen/visitor.html)



In many cases Visitor Centers, Welcome Centers, and Rest Areas are the first real contact that visitors have to our state or a given region, and making a good impression is very important for the tourism industry. It's also the perfect place to introduce environmentally-aware visitors to Virginia Green and to impress them with our tourism industry's commitment to protect and conserve the environment!

Visitor Centers throughout the Commonwealth vary in size and scope. But through thoughtful design and operational techniques, environmental impacts from their operation can be greatly minimized.

Visitor Centers are the various locally and regionally supported tourism centers around the state. Welcome Centers & Rest Areas are run by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

## To Join – 3 Easy Steps

- 1) **Fill Out This Application.** Email or mail the completed checklist to Virginia DEQ at the addresses below. If you are doing the “**core activities**” and you work with or for the tourism industry, then you qualify for *Virginia Green - it's that easy!*
- 2) **Virginia Green Profile.** We will then draft a “profile” on your facility from the information that you submit to us. Once you have approved of the profile, you will officially be a **Virginia Green facility**; and your profile will go on our website and be searchable through the Virginia green tourism website: [www.viriniagreentravel.org](http://www.viriniagreentravel.org).
- 3) **Promote Yourself as Virginia Green.** We will send you a certificate and window decals for display and encourage you to use the logo on your website, signage, and any printed materials.

**Core Activities:** These are the minimum requirements for all **Virginia Green Visitor and Welcome Center Participants**

**We Pledge that we:** (click or mark (X) the box next to the techniques that your facility uses)

- ☐ **Recycle and Reduce Waste.** Visitor Centers and Rest Areas should provide recycling opportunities for visitors that includes cans, glass bottles, plastic, and paper.
- ☐ **Eliminate the use of Styrofoam and minimize disposables.** Complimentary coffee and other beverages should be provided in paper or bio-based cups.
- ☐ **Use Water Efficiently.** Visitor Centers and Rest Areas must have a plan for using water efficiently that considers water-saving faucets, showheads, and toilets; leak detection, and an effective landscape watering plan.
- ☐ **Conserve Energy.** Visitor Centers and Rest Areas must have a plan in place that encourages the replacement of lighting and equipment to energy-efficient alternatives such as high efficiency hand-dryers, fluorescent lighting, LED Exit signs, lighting sensors, efficient heating and cooling, and *EnergyStar*/energy-efficient computers and other equipment.

☐ **Promote Virginia Green participants.** Visitor Centers and Rest Areas should feature the Virginia Green participants from their region.

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**Details about your green activities!** Please tell us more about the great things you are doing. We will include these in your website profile. You can also use this list to get ideas of green techniques you may not have thought of.

### **Recycling – we pledge that we recycle:**

- ☐ Glass (required for Virginia Green restaurants)
- ☐ Aluminum cans
- ☐ Steel cans
- ☐ Plastic
- ☐ Office paper
- ☐ Printer/ copy machine toner cartridges
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Cardboard
- ☐ Packing Supplies
- ☐ Fluorescent Lamps (required by RCRA law)
- ☐ Batteries (required by RCRA law for NiCad and Lead-Acid)
- ☐ Electronics equipment – computers, etc (required by RCRA law)
- ☐ OTHER specifics related to Recycling:

- ☐ Please identify your recycling vendor (the company that takes your recyclables):

### **Waste Reduction – we pledge that we:**

- ☐ Track overall waste bills
- ☐ Have numeric goal to reduce overall materials that go to the landfill
  - kitchen
  - ☐ Donate excess food from events
  - ☐ Compost food waste and other compostables
  - ☐ Have an effective food inventory control to minimize waste
  - ☐ Purchase locally grown produce and other foods
  - ☐ Purchase organic and/or “sustainably-grown” foods (<http://www.sustainabletable.org/issues>)
- dining room
  - ☐ Use reusable dishware and glassware & minimize use of disposables
  - ☐ Use non-bleached napkins and coffee filters
  - ☐ Provide condiments, cream and sugar, etc. in bulk
  - ☐ Use water pitches and filtered water to minimize the use of single-use bottles
  - ☐ Use menus and table placards as opportunity to communicate green activities:
    - ☐ Print menus on recycled content paper with soy-based inks and include recycling symbols, recycled-content, and message about soy-based inks on printed material
    - ☐ Use Virginia Green logo to indicate organic, local or sustainable menu choices
  - ☐ Use screen-based ordering systems
- restrooms
  - ☐ Use bulk soap dispensers in public restrooms
  - ☐ Use high-efficiency hand-dryers
  - ☐ Purchase recycled-content paper-towels and toilet paper
- office
  - ☐ Use a last-in/first-out inventory & effective labeling systems
  - ☐ Encourage suppliers to minimize packaging and other waste materials
  - ☐ Purchase from vendors and service providers with a commitment to the environment
  - ☐ Make 2-sided copies / printed materials
  - ☐ Use electronic correspondence and forms

building and grounds

- ☐ Using “green” cleaning chemicals ([www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org)) that are dispensed in bulk
- ☐ Purchase durable equipment and furniture
- ☐ Purchase low-VOC carpets and fabrics
- ☐ Use reused building materials or those from sustainable sources
- ☐ Use latex paints that are ☐ low-VOC
- ☐ Re-use paint thinners
- ☐ Properly recycle and/or disposal of thinners and solvents (required by EPA-RCRA)
- ☐ Perform preventative maintenance on all appliances, HVAC systems, plumbing, and vehicles
- ☐ Use less toxic materials
- ☐ Use “integrated pest management” (IPM) - [www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm](http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/ipm.htm)
- ☐ Minimize use of pesticides and herbicides in landscaping
- ☐ Use a nutrient management plan that minimizes the use of fertilizers in landscaping
- ☐ OTHER specifics related to Waste Reduction:

**Styrofoam elimination/ reduction of disposables – we pledge that we:**

- ☐ Do not use disposable containers
- ☐ Use disposable containers that are:
  - ☐ Made from bio-based materials
  - ☐ Made from recycled content paper
  - ☐ Compostable
  - ☐ Recyclable
- ☐ OTHER specifics related to your Styrofoam elimination efforts:

**Water Conservation – we pledge that we:**

- ☐ Track overall water usage and wastewater
- ☐ Have a numeric goal to reduce water consumption over time
- ☐ Perform preventative maintenance to stop drips and leaks
- ☐ Use water-flow metering to discover leaks and areas of high use
- ☐ Have: ☐ high efficiency dishwashers, ☐ low flow restrictors on faucets and showerheads, ☐ Low flow toilets, ☐ waterless urinals, ☐ composting toilets, ☐ automatic faucets or toilets in public restrooms.
- ☐ Discourage water-based cleanup (sweep first) and ☐ use microfiber technology mops
- ☐ Have an effective landscape management plan which ☐ utilizes drought tolerant species, ☐ metering and rain gauges, and/or ☐ minimizes lawn areas.
- ☐ Have an effective storm water management plan including: ☐ rain gardens ([www.dof.virginia.gov/rfb/rain-gardens.shtml](http://www.dof.virginia.gov/rfb/rain-gardens.shtml)), ☐ pervious pavement, and/or ☐ minimization of impervious areas (paving, concrete, etc)
- ☐ Have a green roof ([www.greenroofs.com](http://www.greenroofs.com))
- ☐ Use cisterns, ☐ rain barrels ([www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden/stormwater.htm](http://www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden/stormwater.htm)), and/or ☐ drip line irrigation
- ☐ Maintain vegetative buffers around streams and ponds
- ☐ OTHER specifics related to Water Conservation & Efficiency:

**Energy Efficiency – we pledge that we:**

- ☐ Track overall energy bills
- ☐ Have had an energy audit to identify efficiency opportunities
- ☐ Have a numeric goal to reduce energy usage over time
- ☐ Have an “energy management system” in place to track and meter energy usage
- ☐ Calculate the pollution factor of our energy usage by using a pollution calculator, such as [www.cleanerandgreener.org/resources/pollutioncalculator.htm](http://www.cleanerandgreener.org/resources/pollutioncalculator.htm)

- ☐ Have evaluated existing ovens and other kitchen equipment for energy efficiency
- ☐ Have considered upgrading to an Energy Star Commercial Kitchen Package:  
[www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=commercial\\_food\\_service.commercial\\_food\\_service](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=commercial_food_service.commercial_food_service)
- ☐ Use:
  - ☐ High efficiency compact fluorescent light bulbs in all rooms and in canned lighting
  - ☐ LED Exit Signs -- [www.energystar.gov/ia/business/small\\_business/led\\_exitsigns\\_techsheets.pdf](http://www.energystar.gov/ia/business/small_business/led_exitsigns_techsheets.pdf)
  - ☐ High efficiency fluorescent ballasts and lamps (T-5's & T-8's)
  - ☐ Ceiling fans
- ☐ Have a high efficiency heating & air conditioning (HVAC) system
- ☐ Perform preventative maintenance on HVAC system
- ☐ Have geothermal heating and cooling
- ☐ Have individual thermostats for each room
- ☐ Have installed additional insulation
- ☐ Use natural lighting
- ☐ Use lighting sensors to turn on/off lights
- ☐ Use occupancy sensors to turn on/off lights
- ☐ Generate electricity from photovoltaic solar panels
- ☐ Have a solar water heating system
- ☐ Generate electricity from a wind turbine
- ☐ Purchase ENERGY STAR computers, appliances, etc. ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov))
- ☐ Have thermal-rated windows and insulation
- ☐ Use of directional (downward-facing) lighting in parking areas and other outdoor areas
- ☐ Purchase "Green Tags" or "Renewable Energy Certificates" to support new renewable energy resources ([www.green-e.org](http://www.green-e.org))
- ☐ Use LEED criteria when developing new buildings ([www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org))
- ☐ Achieved LEED certification as a \_\_\_\_\_ building
- ☐ Are working to achieve LEED-EB (existing building) certification through operational changes and renovations
- ☐ Use fuel efficient vehicles or hybrid vehicles
- ☐ Use ENERGY STAR's Benchmarking Tools for the Hospitality Industry  
([www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=hospitality.bus\\_hospitality](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=hospitality.bus_hospitality))
- ☐ OTHER specifics related to Energy Conservation & Efficiency:

### **Promote Virginia Green Participants – we pledge that we:**

- ☐ Feature the Virginia Green participants from our region (explain how below):

### **OTHER Creative / Common-Sense "Green" Ideas – Let Us Know About Them!**



## FACILITY INFORMATION

Facility Name:			
Address:			
Website:			
Contact Name:			
E-Mail:		Phone:	

**Describe the Visitor/ Welcome Center including services offered:** Please provide a 1-2 sentence objective description of your facility.

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**Why did your facility decide to *Go Green*?** Please limit to 1-2 sentences

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☐ **Logo & 2 Pictures!** Please email us your logo and 2 pictures that you would like for us to include in your profile.

Complete this checklist and email it to us at [viriniagreen@deq.virginia.gov](mailto:viriniagreen@deq.virginia.gov)

You may also print the completed application and Mail it to:  
Virginia Green Program  
Virginia DEQ Office of Pollution Prevention  
PO Box 1105 Richmond, VA 23240-1105  
804-698-4172

Thank you for voluntarily committing to minimize your impact on the environment!!

**Virginia Green** is a partnership program supported by

